

INFO 289 e-Portfolio: Hints, Reminders, and Clarifications

This document provides hints, reminders, and clarifications for writing comprehensive and robust essays demonstrating your accomplishment of each of our program's 14 Core Competencies.

Competency A: Demonstrate awareness of the ethics, values, and foundational principles of one of the information professions, and discuss the importance of those principles within that profession.

Competency A is *about a profession's values and ethics*. Discuss specific ethical issues/challenges that LIS professionals face in daily practice. Include your response to important foundational documents and discuss your own professional commitments and ethics.

Competency B: Describe and compare different organizational settings in which information professionals practice.

Competency B is *about comparing information organizations or environments*. Since this asks you to compare types of libraries/information centers, you need to do so in a systematic and thorough way. Most people do this by selecting criteria (such as mission, funding source, clientele, institutional home, governance, etc.) and then writing one or more paragraphs about EACH of the main types of information centers or libraries (public, academic, school, special, and perhaps digital or some other kind) in which they compare them based on the criteria.

Competency C: Articulate the importance of designing programs and services supportive of diversity, inclusion, and equity for clientele and employees.

Competency C is *about awareness of diversity within a selected information environment*, such as a particular type of library, archive, or information center. Articulate the importance of supporting diversity, inclusion, and equity in that environment. Your essays and artifacts should demonstrate knowledge of programs and/or policies that promote a diverse environment for **both** clientele and employees.

Competency D: Apply the fundamental principles of planning, management, marketing, and advocacy.

Competency D is *about the management of information organizations*. Devote a section to explicating each of the concepts in the comp statement: planning, management, marketing, and advocacy. Please note that "planning" in this context is talking about organizational planning, using concepts such as a mission statement, action plan, SWOT analysis, needs assessment, etc.

Competency E: Design, query, and evaluate information retrieval systems.

Competency E is *about understanding how databases work*. You need to explicate the comp specifically by explaining the principles of design, principles of querying, and principles of evaluating a database. What principles should we have in mind as we do each of these three activities. Be sure you refer to specific principles from database design, such as controlled vocabulary, attributes, disambiguation, pre and post coordination, etc. In your query section, explain the principles of database searching that make you a more sophisticated searcher than you were before you began the MLIS program. What are some principles of searching that you now know? Finally, for the evaluation section, think about principles for evaluating database results. How do you know that a database is working properly? Think about concepts such as precision and recall for this section.

Competency F: Use the basic concepts and principles related to the selection, evaluation, organization, and preservation of physical and digital information items.

Competency F is *about all aspects of collection management for both physical and virtual collections*. In your essay, you'll need to explain each concept that is included in the comp statement, and also be sure to address the importance of a collection development policy in collection management decisions.

Competency G: Demonstrate understanding of basic principles and standards involved in organizing information such as classification and controlled vocabulary systems, cataloging systems, metadata schemas or other systems for making information accessible to a particular clientele.

Competency G is *about the established structures that have been created to organize information*. Think about structures such as MARC, AACR2, RDA, classification schemes (DDC and LC), Dublin Core, EAD, and other types of metadata systems.

Competency H: Demonstrate proficiency in identifying, using, and evaluating current and emerging information and communication technologies.

Competency H is *about identifying, using, and evaluating technologically sophisticated tools*. Notice the verbs here: identifying, using, and evaluating. This means that you need to write about each of them. For identifying and evaluating, think about how you learn about new tools, and then how you determine whether it is worthwhile for your institution to adopt a particular tool. For the “use” section, you can discuss anything that you've created with newer technology, such as a product created in Google Docs or another type of collaborative tool, a screencast or podcast, a website, blog, etc.

Alternatively, you could explain your use of software to provide a service, such as LibGuides, beacons, and maker technology, etc. The focus here is on producing something with a technology tool, not as much using a searching tool like EBSCO or Lexis-Nexis. Generally, proficiency in the commonly used Microsoft Office products

(Word, PowerPoint, Excel) and basic Web tools is expected of any computer-literate person, and so you will want to include something a bit more sophisticated for this comp. Think about tools you've used in your coursework for presentations, too. Perhaps you've used VoiceThread, Zoom, etc. to create and share videos and other presentations.

Competency I: This has been removed and merged with Competency J.

Competency J: Describe the fundamental concepts of information-seeking behaviors and how they should be considered when connecting individuals or groups with accurate, relevant and appropriate information.

Competency J is *about information-seeking behaviors and how understanding them helps information professionals respond to user needs*. You need to discuss some of the specific info seeking theories/theorists such as those by Carol Kuhlthau, Marcia Bates, Brenda Dervin, etc. Include major models of information seeking behavior as part of your essay. You have to include some specifics about the research that has been done about how people interact with information, and explain how knowing these theories will help you to provide better service to patrons. Then, discuss the efforts of information professionals to link people with the information they seek. You might think about specific ways information professionals provide services that connect users with information. Think of the many varied ways you have learned to connect people with information through your program.

Competency K: Design collaborative/individual learning experiences based on learning principles and theories.

Competency K is *about instructional design*, especially in the context of user training and information literacy instruction.

In your intro, you need to show that you have familiarity with learning theories/principles. Think about ideas such as cognitive load theory, active learning techniques, constructivism, etc. Then in your evidence section, you need to show that each of your pieces of evidence reflects your knowledge of learning theories/principles and demonstrate your knowledge of collaborative learning experiences offered by libraries and information centers.

Competency L: Demonstrate understanding of quantitative and qualitative research methods, the ability to design a research project, and the ability to evaluate and synthesize research literature.

Competency L is *about information professionals doing research themselves as a way to improve services and programs*. Thus, it is about LIS professionals searching the professional literature (let's say the Library Lit database) to see if other people have done research on their research question about programs and services. Then if no one else has done research on the question, the information professional might choose to do primary

research (designing and carrying out an original research study) as a way to answer questions about the service.

In your essay, you'll need to explain quantitative vs qualitative research methods, how a librarian might design a research project, and what research methods are appropriate in a specific work environment. Your evidence can be any paper in which you show that you understand how to synthesize relevant literature on a particular topic, in a way that shows you can apply what you have learned. Your evidence also (ideally) would include something like a research proposal in which you talk about the research method chosen for the question, the data collection and data analysis, and the application of the results. **Comp L is NOT about helping patrons do research.** That is covered in other comps.

Competency M: Demonstrate professional leadership and communication skills.

Competency M is *about leadership and communication, both oral and written*. The essay should include details related to professional leadership and what it means to effectively communicate as an information professional.

Professional leadership includes (these are just some examples from the rubric):

- Commentary on presentation or attendance at professional conferences
- Publication of a book review (such as in the Student Research Journal)
- Service as an elected student group leader
- Service on a School/college committee (such as the Faculty Research Committee, Curriculum Committee, Diversity Committee)
- Leadership in a current work-related position
- Assuming leadership in a group project in class or on the job
- Serving as an INFO203 peer mentor
- Presenting posters

Communication skills include (but are not limited to):

- Teaching Skills
- Collaborative ways of creating, inventing, and sharing ideas

Competency N: Evaluate programs and services using measurable criteria.

Competency N is *about ways to evaluate/assess services and programs using criteria*. Evaluation is meaningless without criteria by which to judge, so it is important to explain evaluation in light of criteria. You might want to mention that criteria can be created by oneself to evaluate a service/program (such as the criteria included in a collection development policy), or they can be used from an established organization, such as the RUSA guidelines for evaluating reference services.

Competency O: Understand global perspectives on effective information practices that are supportive of cultural, economic, educational, or social well-being.

Competency O is *about how you see the connection between your goals and your responsibility to the economic, educational, and social well-being of our global communities.*

This competency essay should demonstrate your:

1. Ability to consider issues from a global perspective
2. Ability to apply international standards and practices
3. Appreciation of the diversity of language and culture

Additional Resources

Two excellent books that might help you understand many of the competencies are:

1. Haycock, K., & Romaniuk, M.-J. (2018). *The portable MLIS: Insights from the experts.* Santa Barbara: Libraries Unlimited.
2. Hirsh, S. K. (2022). *Information Services Today: An Introduction.* 1st, 2nd or 3rd editions, Rowman & Littlefield.